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Missionary Papers.

I.

THE NEW MEMBERS IN OUR CHURCHES.

The year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-eight has been distinguished by many events, showing the rapid procession of the great system of Providence as it approaches its completion. Every one who began life with this century, must have observed, if he has lived with his eyes open, that the marches of the Divine administration have not been uniform. There has been, from year to year, a perceptible acceleration in their velocity, and the world, political, commercial, scientific, and moral, is sensible of the hastened movement. Great changes are quicker, and follow one another in closer succession. All things are tending earnestly towards some grand consummation, of which, if not we, those who shall come not far after us, will be witnesses. The days are at hand when shall be fulfilled the prediction: — "A short work will the Lord make upon the earth." The harvest of the earth is fast ripening, and the sickle is in the hand of the reaper. Blessed is he who is now found ever at the post of duty, working full hours; for he can now execute, in a given time, double the amount accomplished by his most industrious predecessor.

Among the events which give to the past year a marked prominence in the record of the ages, is the Great American Revival, preëminently a Work of Grace. Its characteristics have been none of the terrible, but all of the amiable kind. It has not been a tempest of excitement, leaving devastation in its track; but it has been

a genial mingling of sunshine and shower, spreading over a thousand fields verdure that is lovely to the eye, and bloom that sends grateful odors into the presence of the angels. None that live have witnessed such a work on so broad a scale. None who have preceded us have recorded any thing comparable to it. Along the centuries since the Christian era, there have been many conversions, and occasionally there have been revivals of great power, that have given a rapid expansion to the Christian cause, and taught the revilers of religion the supremacy of the Spirit. But such revivals have been mostly local, covering only a small area. The revival of the last year has been diffused over millions of square miles, and has achieved its noiseless triumphs in the sight of millions of the people. It has not made ours a Christian nation; but it has made hundreds of thousands of our population the subjects of a heavenly kindgom, improving their characters for time, and changing for the infinitely better all their prospects for eternity. Men have marvelled at the quietness of the work, and wondered at consequents where they could see no antecedents. In all their endeavors to account for it by reference to second causes, they have been bewildered and baffled. An invisible Influence of which they knew nothing, was working wonderful reformations, and they built altars, inscribing them, "To the unknown God." That the changes wrought so silently, so effectually, so simultaneously all over the land, were actual, they could not deny. It was a new development in the working of Christianity, and though unbenefitted, they were silenced.

As a demonstration of the vitality and expansive energy of evangelical religion, this revival cannot be over-estimated. The sceptical and the scoffing, during the long period of declension that preceded it, were bold in asserting that our system had become effete, and was to be superseded by something living and more potent for good. God has shown that Christianity is still his, and has administered a rebuke which the triflers may or may not feel. The arguments of a thousand pulpits and a thousand presses could not have so triumphantly vindicated the evangelical doctrine and the evangelical churches. God has spoken, and his enemies have his testimony in unnumbered pages, written, not with ink, but by his Holy Spirit; not in stone, but in hearts renewed and lives reformed.

The churches have been refreshed. The accession of members, large beyond a parallel, is not the only good attained. In no pre-

vious revival have the members, many of long standing, been so effectually quickened and raised to so high a plane of consecration, and holy living, and active working. Never before has the spiritual power of the laity been so brought out and made to bear in coöperation with the ministry. In this fact we see foretokens of good to the church future. The indications are most hopeful of a continuation of the good work, and of still more manifest developments of the true idea of a church as a converting agency. We misread the promises of God in the improved state of the churches, if we are not to see in coming years enlarged displays of Divine Grace.

We fervently congratulate the churches to whom we sustain special relations on the large additions which so many have received to their membership. The distinctive principles of our denomination require us to take it for granted that the churches have been careful in the admission of members; that the yet uncounted thousands of the baptized have "gladly received the word," and given credible evidence that they are new creatures by walking in "newness of life." "Born of God," they have spiritual vitality, and are living to Him, and for Him, and upon Him. "Bought with a price," they are his, and endeavoring to glorify Him with both the body and the spirit. Christ liveth in them, and henceforth they are to live, not unto themselves, but unto Him who is their Life. Having received Him, they are walking in Him, doing his will, honoring his Headship. Such is the theory of Baptist membership; a scrutinizing world will watch for the practical illustration.

Mere accretions to the quantity of a church are not always an augmentation of its true strength. Much depends upon their quality. Numerical additions are good only as they add to the mass of life, and enlarge the amount of working ability. The cases must be few where the favored churches do not find themselves strengthened by the numbers received, and feel that their increase of moral power brings with it a corresponding measure of responsibility to labor for the true end of a gospel church — *the subjugation of the world to Christ*.

What can be done, and should be done, to engage this whole body of new recruits in the service that contemplates nothing less than the world's evangelization? They are enlisted. It is for life, and for death? Do they stand, like the docile, submissive ox, between the plough and the altar, "Ready for either?" Have they been fully informed of what their profession implies? Do they under-

stand their own pledges of entire consecration? The churches that received them did not regard them as fit subjects for baptism and membership, till they had voluntarily declared that they renounced self, and accepted Christ as both their Saviour and their King. Such a declaration was a *sine qua non* to their admission. They have entered, not blindly but intelligently, into the service of Prince Immanuel, promising before God, angels, and men, that they will be true to Him, and do not their own, but his, will. Shall the churches, and shall a watching world, see these pledges manfully redeemed? It is to be taken for granted that their pastors are showing them the field — the world — and indicating the work to be done. Their seniors, those who were in Christ before them, of course, are coöperating with the pastors in marking out work for the new laborers, and showing by plain example how it may be done. It would be interesting to look into a thousand churches, and see the processes by which pastors and deacons and others of the more experienced are training the twenties, and fifties, and hundreds of the undisciplined, but willing, disciples for their appointed service. They are doing it according to their own views of need and fitness. May God help them to do it well. We can think of no service involving weightier responsibilities, or, if judiciously and faithfully performed, promising greater utility to Zion. An unusual number of the converts are persons who have reached or passed maturity; and they have much to unlearn before they can be qualified for the work of their Christian vocation. Their hearts are renewed, but their habits are not in harmony with their new position, and no small amount of wisdom and patience will be requisite to bring them up to the gospel standard of holy living, vigorous acting, generous giving — all for Christ, nothing for self. Many are young, needing the most careful culture, that the habits they form may be strictly, eminently Christian. Fervently do we invoke upon the processes of Christian nurture the benediction of Heaven. If the demand shall be faithfully met; if the high trust committed to the churches shall be truly, earnestly honored, our people will have before them a bright future; our Zion will have occasion, as never before, to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, for she will greatly enlarge the place of her tent.

How to train the entire membership of a church for the work of Christ, and keep every one active in that work according to every one's fitness and ability, is a problem upon which pastors have ex-

pended thought and prayer, and have died without reaching the solution. Many are now pondering the great question, and it is hoped that they will not be discouraged because they cannot make the ideal a satisfactory reality, but will do their utmost, hoping, by the grace of God, to approximate the desired result. The interests at issue are momentous, affecting profoundly the church future and the world future; and no endeavor should be omitted, to enlist, at a time like this, the whole "sacramental host" — every man and every woman — in Christian activities bearing the most directly on the accomplishment of the great evangelical enterprise. Wherever there may be failure, God forbid that here shall be any failure!

As in duty bound — duty to the Master — duty to his people — duty to his elect among the passing generation and the generations to come — we here put in a plea for Missions — a plea for the perishing heathen. The inquiry presses upon us, and we must be restrained by no false modesty from proposing it; — How can the multiplied and multiplying converts of this revival have their attention so directed to the claims of the heathen world as that the cause of Foreign Missions shall receive its appropriate measure of their sympathy, prayers, contributions? They will be shown work to be done in the Sabbath school, in the population directly around them, in their own county or State, in the wide and widening American Union. Heaven forbid that we should discourage effort in any field where souls may be won for Christ. But we may ask that they shall be invited to lift up their eyes, and look on the whole field, now, as never before, white to harvest; now, as never before, open to the reapers. We may ask that pastors shall show them the immensity of the unevangelized portions of the globe; and show them what their fathers in two generations have done to introduce the gospel into the dark places of the earth; and show them how signally, at many points, God has blessed missionary labors; and show them the demand for more men and means to carry forward the work that has been so auspiciously commenced, and that lingers for the lack of laborers and of pecuniary resources; and show them the command of Christ, and the promises of Christ with respect to this comprehensive enterprise. We may ask that pastors shall furnish them with all needed information, or see that it is furnished, to enable them to judge intelligently of the wants of a perishing world, and to decide respecting their own duty, either to go to the heathen themselves as heralds of the glad tidings, or to

supply liberally the means for the support of others who may consecrate to the good work their personal service. We may ask that these new thousands in our churches shall be encouraged to think of the heathen, pray for the heathen, give for the heathen. We cannot sink the subject so far as to solicit sympathy with any particular organization, or beg support for any favorite missionary policy. We plead for a Master who has told us all what to do ; we plead for the heathen who are going, twenty millions or more per annum, to the pagan's grave and the pagan's eternity ; we plead for the churches whose spiritual health and vigor and happiness are deeply concerned in their prosecution of their appropriate work. Men die ; measures accomplish their mission and give place to something new ; voluntary associations succeed for a time, and then are superseded by what the majority prefer ; but the Master lives on, ever the same, and the work which He has assigned to his people remains the same from age to age. If that Master is to be duly honored, and if his work is to be done, we must all bestir ourselves, and gird up the loins of our minds, and enter the field in larger numbers and with a fuller consecration.

If the converts recently welcomed into the churches shall be rightly directed in their reading, thinking, and acting, it may rationally and confidently be expected that two results will in due time be apparent.

1. From among them will come forth many candidates for missionary service in the foreign field. The character of the revival has been such as to inspire the hope of large recruits for the ranks of the Christian ministry. We have seen brought out and made available an unusual amount of that latent power which was known to exist in the churches, but which has not been hitherto so largely developed ; and the conviction has been produced, with the freshness and force of a new discovery, not only that Christ has a claim to all the talents of all his disciples, but also that He honors with success the right use of every variety of talent. Laymen have ascertained that they could render useful service in the winning of souls to Christ, and hence many a young man has had his thoughts directed to the question — " Is it not my duty to be *separated unto the gospel of God?* " Not a few in the last graduated classes in our colleges and universities have already answered the inquiry by relinquishing their life plans, and entering theological seminaries. Others, in succeding classes, having devoted themselves to Christ,

purpose to follow in the same path. The prospect of a considerable enlargement of the number who shall prepare for the pulpit, is peculiarly encouraging, and we cannot doubt that the Lord of the harvest will detach a portion for the more distant and more needy fields. Hardly can we, in this respect, be disappointed. The revival being genuine, the result must be as we anticipate. Parents who have besought God to convert their children, and have said upon their knees that He might, in any form, take them into his own service, and use them for his own glory, will not now prove false to their pledges, but will rejoice in the opportunity to make large returns to Him who has heard their prayers and accepted their covenants. Pastors, who have found helpers in the young members of their flocks, will hail with joy the consecration of such coadjutors to missionary service, and gladly anticipate the honor of being represented thus directly and intimately in the heathen world.

2. Augmented pecuniary contributions must be another effect. We cannot here descend to an appeal for the replenishing of a needy treasury. We speak of what we understand to be characteristics of the revival — an advanced spirituality in the old membership of the favored churches, and an added membership whose faith stands, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. On the part of the old and the new there have been solemn consecrations of all to Christ. Property has not been excepted. The ability to acquire has not been excepted. Where any thing has been truly devoted, all has been devoted. Any reserve has been a reservation of the whole. All, or nothing, is the idea. Numerous thousands have said that their surrender was entire, including themselves, all they were, all they could be, all they could do. Till there is evidence to the contrary, it is to be supposed that they were honest, sincere, earnest. What less, then, can we expect than a generous increase of contributions for the vigorous prosecution of the great work — the diffusion of the gospel throughout the world? The showers of grace that have filled so many springs and swollen so many tributary streams, must surely have effect upon the river of salvation, causing it to overflow, and irrigate, and make fruitful "the parched places of the wilderness." We cannot distrust the mercifulness of the revival. Its tendencies must be benevolent. We are therefore hopeful. Horeb hearts have been smitten by an invisible rod, and have opened, and thirsty nations will drink of the gushing waters. The work of the Holy Spirit presupposes precisely this result. Let

pastors, and all others who have influence in this direction, see that the channels are kept open, and the rills and the rivulets kept running.

The measure of our mingled hope and solicitude upon these points we cannot adequately express. We are living, and doing our little, at a period that is to every observant Christian mind one of profound interest. Waiving all reference to aspects purely seeular, we look with amazement at the moral bearing of events that have occurred during the ten months of the present year. Terrible as have been the scenes in Hither India, we see in the results that the gospel is to have access to swarming millions who have hitherto been comparatively unapproachable, rendered so, not by any impregnable barriers of Brahminism, or Islamism, but by the cupidity of an overgrown, intolerant corporation, whose revenues were derivable from the protection and countenance of antiquated errors and debasing idolatries. The supremacy of that corporation is broken; a change of policy is inaugurated; the Christian world may enter and dispense to the famishing the bread of life. And Farther India — God has appeared for her. Diplomacy, backed by power, and aided by intestine commotion, has been the instrument; but God has presided over the movements of great nations, and China, inclosing one third of the population of the globe, is open to the feet of them who bring glad tidings and publish peace! Wonderful events! How full of material for thanksgiving to the God of salvation! How indicative of Christian duty and Christian responsibility! How many prayers, extended through long years, have been summarily answered in as many weeks! God's people have asked and waited, amid the revilings of many who have inquired, "Where is the promise of his coming?" till faith began to falter, and the prospect grew dim in the thickening darkness, and at length the Breaker has come forth and shown what He can do among the ramparts of political sin and national exclusiveness. "What hath God wrought?" Let us not fail to recognize his interposition and adore Him. Neither we nor our fathers have had such occasion to raise a special Ebenezer.

Let us not in bewilderment of mind, occasioned by the greatness of such events, sink into disqualification for the great trusts which are coming upon us. Let us not be obnoxious to the reproach — "None of the men of might have found their hands." Let us calmly interpret the lessons of Providence, and determine our true

position in our own age and in relation to coming ages. "There remaineth very much land to be possessed." By a significant index and by voices that speak to the inner souls of all the redeemed, we are reminded of our duty: — "Go up and possess the land." Let us dismiss other matters as impertinences, and manfully address ourselves, one and all, to the execution of the Master's command: — "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

II.

THE PERMANENT AND THE TRANSIENT IN CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

Men and things, institutions and religious systems, follow their tendencies. In human nature, apart from the grace of God, the tendency is to greater deterioration. The tendency of civilization, without an evangelical basis, is to barbarism. The tendency of Christianity, as embodied in partially sanctified minds, is to formalism in one direction, and to fanaticism in another. The tendency of voluntary associations, not excluding churches, is to division and subdivision, and ultimate reduction to an intensely selfish individualism.

The great object of considerate reformers in all ages has been the counteraction of these tendencies, and such a reversal as should secure better results; and seldom have they accomplished their ends without a resort to strong measures, which conservative men regarded as revolutionary and therefore dangerous. Mild remedies were useless, and they found it necessary to strike blows that startled the timid, and dismayed the bondmen of prescription and usage. Bitterly indeed have such innovators been assailed; and if

the spirit of their times could have been perpetuated, their names would have come down through history as only infamous. But the careful readers of ecclesiastical annals are well aware that every revival of the Christian Life, and every marked expansion of the Christian Faith, have dated their origin to the period when such blows were struck by some bold hand, awakening attention to unperceived tendencies, and compelling men to revert to first principles, and, leaving the old routine, to seek better paths for their own and their children's feet. In looking back upon the beneficent changes which were thus inagurated, we wonder at the opposition encountered by those who sought only good issues; but we do not wonder that the voices of a grateful posterity have lifted the names of the denounced into permanent conspicuity. Hence, as we now see some brave spirit, unintimidated by public opinion, standing out from the mass, indicating new routes for reaching a desirable end, and excavating new channels for thought and activity, we remember the instructive records of the past, and would say to the apprehensive and the prejudiced, that some good thing may come even out of that Nazareth. We would not ignore wisdom as the pilot of true progression; we would do no unnecessary violence to the most iron-bound conservatism; but we are far from supposing that no new light can be thrown upon the lines of Christian duty, or that, if new light is granted, it must come through certain time-honored mediums. Some things are permanent, and we bless God that they are; but is there no such thing as progress? Novelty is of little consequence, except to superficial minds; but may we not look hopefully for development even from that which we know to be enduring and unchangeable? We sympathize not a little with the godly puritan, Robinson, who, in his parting address at Leyden to uch of his flock as were about to embark in the Mayflower, said: —"If God reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his holy word." If there may be no new revelations, there may be, there frequently are, providential expositions, turning towards us new aspects of old truths, indicating new paths for pilgrim feet, and opening new avenues to fields of Christian enterprise.

Whatever tends to disencumber the inner life of Zion of a burdensome machinery, and give that life greater freedom of respiration

and a wider scope for practical endeavor, we hail with hope. The process may not have been the gentlest; there may be, for a short period, seeming chaos; the querulous may insist that matters are going badly; but from the disturbed elements order will arise; the genius of Christianity will be seen emerging thence in greater simplicity and with freshened energies. She must have form; she must work through form; but it is good to see her cast off all excess of form, disenthralling herself from all with which a worldly policy has encompassed her, and accepting only such instrumentalities as will best enable her to demonstrate to the world her true spirit, and bless the world by her earnest fidelities.

Nothing could be more simple in form, or more predominant in spirit, than the great enterprise of Christian Love, as it was committed in the beginning by the Master to his disciples. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The work to be done was clearly indicated; no other work could be a substitute for it; but how sparing were the commands as to the modes of doing it! They were to *preach*, *teach*, *testify* — terms sufficiently concurrent to denote the service required, and yet so various as to leave the impression that the forms of that service might be diversified. They were told where to begin, and charged to spread out their endeavors along every radius to the circumference of humanity. Their work would not be done till the gospel should have been proclaimed in all the world to every human being. The command was issued to all without reserve. There was then no church organization; but there were believers united by the double bond of love to Christ and love to one another; and they, as redeemed sinners and chosen laborers, were bidden to do that work. We have never been able to see in the New Testament, what others profess to have discovered, that Christ laid the responsibility of the world's evangelization upon the churches, as such, in their corporate form; but we do find there plain evidence that He laid it with its whole weight upon the people, "called to be saints." They might or might not do the work as organized societies; — all this was left to be adjusted to providential circumstances; but the work must be done and done by his followers.

Here, then, commences the distinction between that in the enter-

prise which is permanent, and that which may be temporary and transient. There could be no change in the actual service to be performed; but the modes by which it should be executed might vary in different periods, different communities, different circumstances. The gospel must be conveyed to all the dwellers on the earth, but no specific forms of service were prescribed or made binding. And herein we see the prescient wisdom of the Master. He foresaw that to the end of time there would be needed precisely this service. Should the year arrive when his people could say, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded," the next year would bring upon the field of effort new millions requiring a continuance of the same work, and for the same reasons. Till procreation should cease, children of the apostasy would be multiplied, and the time would not come for a respite from evangelical labor; souls in peril of perdition would still need the great saving agency. But, while He thus knew that the demand would be constant, always founded in the one invariable necessity occasioned by sin, He foresaw that the outer life of the world would be subject to indefinite modifications; that the conditions of humanity would be multiform and ever changing; that civilization, following in the train of Christianity, would throw new light upon the great problems of human life, and furnish new facilities for the pushing forward of the Christian enterprise. Consequently, with a wise forecast, He avoided defining the modes by which his servants should execute his will. As to the work itself He left them no discretion; He did not, even by implication, allow them the slightest liberty to make any alteration. The work must be done, and they must do it. But as to the modes and means, He did leave much to be determined by themselves. One man might go himself, defraying his own expenses. Another might go with pledges of support from an individual or an association. A church, or any other combination of Christian men, might send one or one hundred laborers, providing for their sustenance. The laborers might go into one field or into another, as Providence should indicate special openings. They might go singly, or in bands, as should seem best promotive of their usefulness. Their object should be to get the gospel before the minds of as many as possible; but the modes of communication were not prescribed. Unquestionably, importance was attached to *preaching* — the conveyance of the Christian message by the articulate voice to the hearing ear; but the terms used allow a wide scope, and include every method by

which the gospel can be intelligibly communicated to the human mind. Special prominence, for obvious reasons, is given to *oral utterance;* and in every period Christ has signally honored those who, in this matter, have preferred his wisdom to their own; but none will say that he has not also honored other means with distinguished success. The gospel is his instrument for saving lost men; his regenerated people are his agents, required to use the saving instrumentality. Their duty is to use it in the best way.

We do not propose to consider questions now in debate as to the proper forms of voluntary associations for the accomplishment of the great Christian work; much less to descend to the radical inquiry touching the legitimacy of such organizations as evangelizing agencies. We are at work in one of them, as best we can, and shall probably continue to work there, till somebody, wiser than ourselves, shall indicate how we can do better for Christ and the heathen. We wait for light, and shall hail with joy the first new ray, whatever the medium through which it may reach us.

At the awakening of the missionary life, a half century since, the Providence of God seemed to indicate that the greatness of the work demanded the union of large numbers. The duty to obey the Master's command was recognized, and many were agreed that something should be at once attempted; and their wisdom could discover no better means than large organizations which should combine general interest, multiplied contributions, and associated councils. This probably was the best that could then have been done. But, of late, the inquiry has been pressed upon thousands of minds, if this is a system to be perpetuated; if the accomplishment of the great work does not require something different—something more simple in structure, more economical in the working, more effective in results. We are not alarmed by such inquiries; we regard them as hopeful indications. So far as they originate in a disposition to do more for a needy cause, they promise good. These organizations, in their existing forms, may have about fulfilled their mission. They certainly have done a good service, and now, if anything better can be devised, let good men, in the spirit of their Master, and with hearts longing for the coming of his kingdom, enter upon the work of revision and reconstruction. Whatever may have been the occasions of their comparative imbecility, our large societies have assuredly failed to bring out and combine

more than a thousandth part of the ability, physical and spiritual, of our denomination. Their treasuries have been the reservoirs, receiving and disbursing, of many small contributions; and with these resources a few men have been employed to publish the glad tidings at home and abroad; and God has not withheld his blessing. But, after setting out of the account all such as complain and grumble because it is their nature, and all such as desire change for the sake of change, we find a growing feeling among the best friends of Christian missions—the givers and the workers—that there must be changes somewhere, or the work will continually linger; that personal consecration to the work, instead of being the exception, must be more largely the rule; that contributions must be upon a more liberal scale; that the whole enterprise must be so conducted as to bring it into closer contact with Christian hearts and make it more at home on Christian altars. It is our own work, and we must do it; and nothing should come in between us and it, dividing our interest, or diminishing our responsibility. He, therefore, will render to us—the whole people—a good service, who shall point out improved modes of Christian activity, such as shall, if possible, be more in harmony with the purposes and plans of Him whom we acknowledge as our "Leader and Commander."

In the *service* we recognize a sacredness which no one may touch. It is unalterably permanent. The gospel must be published among all nations. The duty is binding upon all the friends of Christ; the obligation presses directly upon every individual. No one can do the whole; every one can do something. The law is equitable, requiring only according to what a man hath; but it is inexorable, satisfied with nothing less. Heaven hasten the day when all shall feel the measure of their own obligation, and repudiate no part of it, contrive for no abatement.

But in *modes* of service we recognize no such sacredness. They are not divinely appointed; and though for the time being they may accord with providential intimations, yet they are transient, one giving place to another, and all liable to be successively superseded. Churches rise and flourish; then decline and become extinct. Societies, organized inside or outside of the churches, all have in them the elements of human imperfection, and their tendency is to decomposition. The work to be done is unchangeably the same through all the centuries; the agency—the living brother-

hood of the redeemed—is ever the same ; but the forms of individual or of associated action are mutable ; not one is the same for any long period.

This arrangement is manifestly wise. There is enough of the permanent to render us sufficiently conservative, holding us invariably to one point, and requiring us, as accountable servants, to frame all our modes of action with reference to the speediest and most effective execution of our one great comprehensive service. There is enough of the transient to keep us wakeful, observant of facts and facilities and openings and aspects of Providence, and to bring into requisition all our powers, reflective, inventive, executive. Our fealty to our Lord and the terms of our consecration bind us to the doing of our appointed work ; and the pressure of this obligation we are at all times to feel, and in all our endeavors to recognize. This matter is laid upon our consciences and our hearts, and there it must abide with its whole weight. If, then, we fully estimate our responsibility, and are disposed to honor its demands, other things can safely be intrusted to us—we mean still the Christian people—for we shall have constantly in view one object, clearly defined, and looming up largely in our field of vision, and we shall use the powers which God has given us in such a manner as may best subserve the grand end. By a due regard to this distinction between the permanent and the transient in Christian service—a regard practical as well as theoretical—we shall be held steadily to the performance of the true service and thus avoid delinquency, and we shall be stimulated to seek the best modes of performance, thus avoiding stagnation. There will be a healthful commingling of the conservative and the progressive.

Now, we see no valid reason why an individual Christian, if he have the ability, and be so disposed from love to Christ and to human souls, may not, either directly and independently, or through some society, send forth and support one missionary, or two, or five. The number is not small who could do this, and have money left enough to ruin their children. Would that thousands were thus represented in the heathen field ! And we see no valid reason why two or more might not combine for the same purpose, as the example has already been presented in one of our cities, and do the work as vigorously as they could do the business of a secular partnership. The same may be said of a church, or of affiliated churches. The time has been when to speak thus would have been

regarded as treason against a society. But that time has passed away, and with it have passed some other things. Who gave a society the monopoly of all that is to be done in a given community for the world's conversion? What claim has any human organization to be the almoner of all the funds contributed, or the appointer and director of all the laborers offering, for a particular department of service? We cherish the society, and coöperate with it; but we assume not that it presents the only or the best form of useful agency; we claim for it no sacred prerogatives. It belongs to the transient, and we shed no tears over its dissolution, provided there come in its place something better, something that shall be nearer in harmony with the permanent, something through which we and others can act more efficiently for Christ and the perishing millions. We give ourselves, heart and soul, to the one enterprise that never changes; but we identify ourselves with no part of the mutable. We are absorbed in the work which is to be done, and which calls loudly for a higher consecration of our persons and our resources; we are unanxious about forms. We regard it as the duty of the existing generation of Christians to convey the gospel to the existing generation of the unevangelized, the world over. Provided the duty be performed, we care little as to the modes of service. Let us have a part in the work; let us share with our brethren in the necessary sacrifices; and we rejoice and will rejoice to the end.

We speak by no authority other than of Love; we avail not ourselves of the position in which our brethren have placed us to dictate or to manage; we are servants with them and for them of a common Master, and we are their servants for Jesus' sake. The cause is no more ours than it is theirs. The grand questions before them and us are, How shall the cause be best promoted? How shall the bread of life be borne, in the purest form, in the largest quantities, in the shortest time, to the spiritually starving in all lands? Our concern is that none of God's people may lose sight of the main idea — the work to be done; that none may be diverted by a regard to secondary considerations from the claims of that which ought ever to be primary; that the interest belonging to the permanent may not be transferred to the transient; that chirurgical experiments upon the forms of Christian benevolence may not be fatal to the spirit; that our expenditures, physical and spiritual, upon mere machinery, may not exhaust our resources, and render us bankrupt debtors to the heathen; that in our debates about mis-

sionary policy we may not kill out the missionary life; that while endeavoring to manufacture public opinion in a given direction, we may not prove recreant to our higher and holier trust. Minor questions have their appropriate places; but who can estimate the wrong or the damage, when they are exalted out of their places, and cause a neglect of the great Christian Duty? We would imperatively charge ourselves, and we would affectionately exhort all our brethren not to forget the Redeemer's command — not to become unmindful of obligation to Him. Let this be ever prominent before us, ever conscientiously cherished. And we would remember, and entreat all to remember, how pressing are the wants of the unevangelized millions. How can they be saved without faith in Christ? "How can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard; and how can they hear without a preacher; and how can they preach except they be sent?" On every account, temporal and eternal, the heathen need the gospel; and believing this, we feel it, we speak it always and earnestly. We dwell not upon this truth, perfunctorily, in order to subserve official ends; but we hold it before our own minds to countervail a tendency to sluggishness and to warm up the human affections; and we lift it aloft at all times and on all occasions as the truth fitted to stir the spirit of every one who possesses an element of genuine Christian philanthropy. The heathen are sinking to perdition annually by millions! There is provision in the gospel of Christ for their salvation! The Christians of our day have the ability to send them the gospel. If this work be not done, then whose will be the responsibility of neglect?

III.

OUR WORK AND OUR PRINCIPLES.

THE second article of our Constitution defines the WORK to which the organization is pledged: — "The single object of this Union shall be to diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ, by means of missions, throughout the world."

The statement, as it respects the field of operations, is comprehensive. It is restricted to no portion of the globe; it covers the broad area of the earth's surface, land and water. To the dwellers on every continent and island, to "the abundance of the sea," to the whole race of Adam now living and hereafter to be born, the Union may send the teachers of the great salvation. That it does not everywhere institute missions may be attributable, partly to want of ability, and partly to self-imposed limitations suggested by wisdom and courtesy; for, as a single division of the Christian laborers, we can be held responsible for only a fair proportion of the service; and, as it is wise to enter first the most needy fields, so it is both wise and courteous not to intrude upon territory that is already occupied by other evangelical Christians. But the "object" is coëxtensive with that of the Great Commission—"all the world. . . . every creature." Our work has reference to the entire breadth of humanity, and will not be finished till there shall be no more human beings needing information of the way of life by Jesus Christ. For the conversion of none is the Union responsible; but it avows as its aim the conveyance to all of that "Law of the Lord" which "is perfect, converting the soul." It may not be able to do the whole that needs to be done; but it stands pledged before heaven and earth to do its utmost, and approximate as nearly as possible to the accomplishment of the purpose. On this point there can be no difference of interpretation, and no differing views of a responsibility voluntarily assumed and publicly recognized.

But our work, as indicated by the terms of the defining article, has its limitations. We declare what is our "SINGLE object," and to this, as a society, we restrict ourselves. While we promise to do a certain thing, we also promise, as a corporate body, to do nothing

else. We agree in concert "to diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ . . . throughout the world," and, as what is not included in an agreement, is excluded, we are virtually pledged to do nothing more. The Union cannot engage in any other work, or have any other end. Another society may do other things; but this has a "single object," comprehensive enough for all its present efforts, and a thousand-fold more, and yet so restricted as to shut out much that philanthropy may think desirable. This work the Union proposes to do "by means of missions;" that is, by the sending and the supporting of approved missionaries, who shall, as the servants of Jesus Christ, diffuse the knowledge of his religion. This, by necessary construction, includes the supply of such means as may be requisite to enable the laborers best to accomplish the service which, in our behalf, they undertake. All we may do for them must be exclusively to facilitate and render as effective as possible their true missionary work.

Thus we engage among ourselves; and when the body shall add anything to its "single object," or shall do aught else than "diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ," or shall seek to accomplish its end in any other way than "by means of missions," then any and every member dissenting from the changes is absolved from obligation to coöperate with the Union; the bond is broken, and possibly rights are infringed. The agreement is to do a certain thing in a certain way, and the body can do only that thing in that way. When the agreement shall be violated in a single instance, it will be no longer binding. But so long as the contract is maintained inviolate, and "the single object" is faithfully kept in view, all the constituent members are bound to coöperate in efforts for the attainment of the common end. The Constitution holds all who accept membership under it to the united prosecution of the work to which it pledges the organization. When that instrument shall be violated by the body, in any of its provisions, none are longer bound by it but such as consent to overlook the violation.

This, too, we engage to the States, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, from whose legislatures we hold our acts of incorporation. Both charters recognize the second article of our Constitution as fundamental, and the other articles as merely prescribing the way in which "the single object" shall be pursued. Should the Union deviate from any of the specifications in the second article, the result, we presume, would be the forfeiture of both charters, and a

consequent loss of the legal powers and rights with which they invest the organization.

Thus much we have thought it proper to say respecting OUR WORK, as defined by human documents. Everything is so explicit as to admit of no private, no double interpretation. We acknowledge, in plain terms, our intention to perform a certain service in a particular form; and, while the service and the form have ample breadth, they have their limitations, definitively, and we think wisely, indicated. Enough is allowed; more would jeopard the efficiency of the Institution. We undertake what neither we nor our children will see fully accomplished; but we trespass upon the rights of none; we attempt nothing which others can do better than ourselves.

All will probably agree that the work of the American Baptist Missionary Union is neither more nor less than appropriate Christian work. Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the suitableness or the desirableness of a general organization as the agency, and however many may question the fitness of this particular corporation for the best accomplishment of "the single object" to which it limits itself, none, we think, will deny that its professed aims and means are strictly Christian. It proposes to do a work which Christ has commanded to be done, and which every considerate disciple regards as matter of obligation. It embraces the whole field which Christ requires to be visited by the messengers of his grace. It provides for the use of just those means which Christ appointed for the world's evangelization. But it is not apparent that Christ requires the existence and agency of just such organizations as those by which Christians of the various evangelical sects are now conducting the work of missions. They may be wise arrangements, and they may not. Here good men may differ, and their differences make a large demand for charity and forbearance and mutual concession. But in regard to the work itself, its nature, its extent, and its imperative necessity, good men certainly cannot disagree. A careful review of the New Testament with reference to this point, will lead, we are sure, to but one conclusion. The teachings of the Saviour, and both the teachings and labors of the inspired Apostles, make it plain that "the single object" of our Missionary Union includes the principal service to which the followers of Christ are appointed. In addition to the care of their own souls and a sedulous attention to all those duties which pertain

to social life, what is more fully enjoined or made more imperative than the diffusion of gospel truth throughout the world? As we understand the requirements of Him whom we call Master, and the activities of those who were under his special direction, this is preëminently *the* work of his redeemed people.

We remember when the Baptists on this continent had no Foreign Mission and were thinking of none. And we remember how God, in an extraordinary manner, summoned our attention to the wants of the heathen world, and set thousands to praying and giving with reference to the salvation of the perishing. With every movement in every year, since the first startling appeals of Judson and Rice came across the seas, we have been familiar, and the history of American Baptist Missions is photographed in detail upon tablets more enduring than metal. No lesson is more distinct among our convictions than this, that our enterprise originated with God, and that through us He has effectuated more than the most sanguine, as Baldwin, Staughton, Furman, Gano, Semple, Bolles, Mercer, Bennett, and others of precious memory, forty-five years ago anticipated. We have made some mistakes; we have had some reverses; we have been obliged to abandon some fields; we have not done a tithe of what we might and should have done; but still God has greatly blessed our imperfect endeavors. We have devoted much time and talk to organizations, and constitutions, and relations, and policy, and other secondary matters, and expended much upon machinery, that belonged to the heathen; but, notwithstanding our lack of wisdom, and our often misdirected zeal, God has given us great success, and rebuked us more by goodness than by severity. We have from the beginning had prophets of evil, whispering auguries of failure; but God has honored our efforts in at least three of our Missions, the Burman, the Cherokee, and the German, in a way to put to shame their doleful vaticinations. Can any century since the first show another mission so wonderful in gathered fruits as the Karen? When, since the last of the Apostles fell asleep, have so many thousands, in so brief a period and in a single field, been converted to Christ?

We mention these facts, not that we would cater to a boastful spirit, but that we may honor Him who has bestowed this great grace upon the deeply unworthy. We have done comparatively ttle, and done it often in a very imperfect way, and we have every occasion for humility and self-abasement; but the Divine blessing

has been large, and indicative of what might have been the results had we, in a warmer love and a stronger faith, put forth the full measure of our ability. And it may not here be impertinent to inquire if we duly appreciate our work, and feel the pressure of our responsibilities. God has given us select fields, productive fields, equalled in promise by none on earth. He has favored us with beginnings of the most encouraging character. Do we understand the bearings of his Providence and Grace with respect to our enterprise? Is it a grateful requital of his kindness so to limit our contributions, when He is giving such efficiency to worn and sinking laborers whom we have promised to support, but from whom we have withheld the means of useful activity? While we now write, as our missionaries in Burmah are gathering abundant sheaves for the heavenly garner, they are half supplied with needed resources by the liberality of English residents, and by generous remittances from English Christians in Bengal! We blush at the recital; we are painfully mortified; and yet we bless God that He has raised up friends to do what we have culpably neglected, and thus shown his appreciation of the services of our brethren. He will have the work done, and, if we prove recreant to our trust, will put it into other hands that shall thrust in the sickle and gather to his glory the ripened harvest. We ought to count it a privilege to live in this age, and have before us such open doors of usefulness. What Christian people under the whole heaven, have greater occasion for thankfulness and entire consecration? Who can do more for the diffusion of Christian truth? On whom rest weightier responsibilities? Who have stronger reasons for affectionate, vigorous coöperation?

Ours is a Christian work, an appointed work, a comprehensive work, a fraternal work, a promising work, a pledged work, a protracted work. It is Christ's work, and therefore OUR WORK.

OUR PRINCIPLES are few, simple, and easily understood.

1. THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST. This is primary and paramount. The New Testament represents Him who was crucified for our sakes as the "Head of all principality and power," "Head of the Body, which is the Church," and "Head over all things to the Church." In our polity as a denomination we have uniformly recognized this fact. The Headship of Christ is with us a preëminently distinctive principle. We know not the people who, in theory, make it more

prominent; we know not the people who more fully conform to it in practice. We are accustomed, in every question relating to Christian service, to refer directly to the teachings and examples of the Saviour. The more nearly any persons approximate, in their belief and practice, to exact conformity to the standard furnished in the four Gospels, the more do we regard them as entitled, not only to our distinctive name, but also to that higher designation, CHRISTIAN. If we accept with special deference the instructions and doings of the Apostles after the day of Pentecost, it is because they were inspired to speak and write and act. They were under the direction of the intelligent, governing Head, and what they said and did in his service was but the development of his will. In his lessons, doctrinal and practical, we find the elements of all truth and duty; in those of the Apostles, we find the seeds He planted in active germination. They added nothing to what He furnished; but, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they evolved the rudimental truths and precepts which He gave to their custody. He delegated to them none of his supremacy; He employed them as agents to execute a continuous work, while He superintended the process and caused to be transmitted to us the results as his own, bearing the seal of his ownership. The Headship of Christ is throughout a New Testament idea. That others have so long ignored it is nothing to us. Christ is the One Lawgiver in the spiritual realm. Set as King in Zion, He declares the decree, and for us as his subjects there can be no other legislation. It is his exclusive prerogative to enact; it is our business to receive the law from Him, and obey it with no addition, no deduction, no modification. He has set over us no interpreters of his laws. He has made them so simple and plain that their meaning is obvious. The differences in construction do not justify the inference that they are obscure or equivocal; for these differences have arisen, not from the mass of common sense readers, but from the few who have assumed to be authorized interpreters — an office which the Master never created—a service which He never intrusted to one more than another. He intended his laws for our government, and made them, rather than human commentaries, authoritative. We are bound by what He says, and not by what any man or body of men declare that He says. We are held to a careful imitation of his examples just as we find them described in the inspired record, and not as others represent them. The interpretations of fallible men,

however pious and learned, are not binding upon the conscience. Hence, if a man comes with a system of divinity, or a code of Christian ethics, and would impose either upon us as the substance of inspired teaching, we simply inquire for his authority to interpret on our behalf. He may preach, and we respectfully hear; he may write, and we considerately read; but we hold ourselves at liberty to compare what he preaches or writes with the Divine Word, and to accept or reject according to our own interpretations. If he proves himself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," we may extend great deference to his qualifications as an instructor; but we cannot accept him as Christ's viceroy, or in any sense as lord of our faith or our conduct. Our individual relation to the Saviour is personal and direct, without any submediator, and equally personal and direct is our individual responsibility. We "call no man Master;" "One is our Master, even Christ." If we turn from Him, "to whom shall we go?"

2. The Condition of Man as Lost. Taking the inspired Word as our source of information, we are assured of this truth, and in a manner that excludes all idea of corroboration. Looking abroad among mankind, we expect, in accordance with what God has explicitly taught us, to find all men deeply, fatally depraved. We believe in the unity of the human race, and know, upon Divine authority, that all are participants and inheritors of the effects of the first apostasy. We believe God; and in that faith which stands, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, there are no degrees. Consequently, as we see the truth illustrated by facts, however numerous and strong, our conviction rests upon no broader or more reliable foundation. We credit what God says upon the basis of his veracity; we believe that man, universally, is apostate from Him, wickedly alienated and justly condemned; and, though we have seen but a few of the millions, we are sure that by nature they are all the children of wrath as much as those whom we have seen. And we do not judge the many by the few specimens that have come under our observation; we judge the whole in accordance with the testimony of Him who knows, and who never speaks falsely. We go not to the heathen with the gospel because we have learned from human witnesses that they are very degraded and corrupt; but because God has informed us of their debasement and their wretched prospects for eternity, and

because our Master has bidden us go "and preach the gospel to every creature." The facts ever coming to our knowledge of their ignorance, superstition, and misery, have an influence upon our feelings, stimulating our pity and exciting our benevolence; but our PRINCIPLE is not the product of these facts; it has its origin, not in personal observation or in human testimony, but in "the faith of the operation of God." We believe, and therefore feel, and speak, and act. Man is everywhere guilty of infractions of the Divine law, everywhere depraved in his affections, everywhere under condemnation. Such is his character that his prospect for the infinite future is dismal beyond the power of man to describe. The Bible gives us but one view of his case, and, apart from the free, unmerited grace of God, authorizes no hope for a single soul. It is a mournful truth; but so the Word of God teaches, and upon that truth we plant ourselves as a fundamental principle.

3. THE DIVINE PROVISION FOR MAN'S SALVATION. We regard the gospel as the only remedy for the damage which sin has done to the human soul. It is a remedy, exactly and fully suited to the nature of the case, and, as applied by the Holy Spirit, completely efficacious. It includes the two parts of the needed provision — the legal and the moral;—an atonement which so satisfies the claims of justice that God can consistently save whom He will; and the influence of the Holy Spirit to renew the heart, working in it genuine love, repentance and faith. There is provision for the cancelling of guilt, and for the removal of depravity. The work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, connected and coöperative, save the soul. By no other agencies can man be redeemed or regenerated. This provision is abundant, and is dispensed by God according to his sovereign pleasure. Man may commend it to his fellow man, but in no case can he insure its acceptance.

4. THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO PUBLISH THE GOSPEL TO MANKIND. We might infer the duty from the unchangeable law of humanity: —"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This requires of us, that so far as we value the gospel for our own benefit, we should value it for others, and do what we can to make them partakers of the same benefit. Every human being who may need any good that we are able to confer is our neighbor. If we love him as we love ourselves, we shall confer upon him, according to our ability,

that good, doing our utmost to make him as happy as ourselves. His happiness will be sought by us equally with our own. And this is the spirit which the gospel generates in every renewed heart. Apart from this, no man has valid evidence that he is a Christian. Every one who loves God, loves his fellow men, and desires and labors for their spiritual welfare. Having himself been saved by the grace of God, as conveyed through the gospel, he is anxious to proclaim that gospel to others who need its gracious provisions for the same reasons that he needed them. We have no conception of Christian character where this element is wanting. Love to every human being, and a burning desire for the salvation of all, are characteristic of the recent convert, and of the revived Christian, and are the manifestation and the measure of that piety which proves the soul to be in sympathy with Christ. What Christ was, he is according to his measure. Never can he say, "Christ liveth in me," unless he is doing what he can "to seek and to save the lost." But, for this duty, we have a primary and special reason, not inferred but positive — the command of Him whose supremacy we acknowledge. He will have the work done, and will have his professed friends do it. He does not leave us to deduce the obligation from a general law, or make the service dependent upon an affection that is variable in its force; He has laid it upon us by special enactment; and will have us feel the constant pressure of the obligation growing out of our relation to Him as our Redeemer and Sovereign. Owing to the imperfection of our natures, at the best only partially sanctified, He saw that we should need the application of this particular law, ever reminding us that the duty is not one of mere inference, but one of positive obligation, never to be reasoned away, never, with impunity, to be evaded. The requirement is unequivocal, easily comprehensible. The service indicated is commanded by Him who has the right to command, and whose commands are never arbitrary. It is therefore to us a matter not only of moral but also of positive law, and our principle, on both grounds, is unreserved, cheerful obedience. For some positive statutes we do not see the reasons, and we obey implicitly because the services are commanded. Here we understand the reasons for the requirement, and we obey both because the duty is original on the basis of human brotherhood, and because it is commanded by Him whose Headship we have cordially accepted. Recognizing the common Fatherhood of God, we seek the good of

all mankind as we seek our own. Recognizing the supremacy of Christ, we serve Him in the way that He has specified. The general law and the particular law are in harmony; they look to one grand result; with reference to that result we yield obedience. Apart from a cordial, earnest obedience, we could neither regard ourselves as the children of God nor as the disciples of Jesus. Our duty is plain, and we could not neglect it if we would, we would not if we could. It is in harmony with our new nature; it furnishes an outlet for our warmest desires, our most enlarged aspirations. It is our life-service; we love it for the sake of our suffering, perishing race; we love it for the sake of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost into whose great name we are baptized.

5. Christian Coöperation. The work of evangelizing a guilty, depraved world is committed by Christ to his disciples. The obligation is laid upon every individual conscience; the service is required of every individual to the full extent of his ability. Christ has made every one of his redeemed a debtor to the whole impenitent world, and from that indebtedness there is no escape but by honest payment. We know not the power, short of the Supreme, that can grant any one a dispensation, exempt any one, from the application of the law. There is a responsibility pressing upon every redeemed person to do his utmost for the execution of this trust. He may do his proportion of the work in one way or another, just as he understands the expressed requirements of his Master or the indications of his Providence; but he must do it, or fail in his practical allegiance and accept the consequences. The service is the preaching of the gospel to every creature; nothing more, nothing less. Many things may be requisite to the full accomplishment of such a service, and they of course are included in the command. The means necessary to the end must be as conscientiously provided as the ultimate issue must be conscientiously sought. The aggregation of numbers into churches at the first for the accomplishment of Christian purposes would seem to indicate the will of the Master that his disciples should coöperate in the great enterprise which He assigned to them. He commanded the service anterior to the formation of churches; but by forming them He seemed plainly to say to his followers that such were the nature and the extent of the service as to require union of counsels, contributions, and efforts. Some could go; the many could send. Some could do the preaching; others

could meet the necessary expenses of their preaching excursions. No formal system was adopted; the machinery was the simplest possible. Love was at the foundation — love to Christ, to one another, to a perishing world; and such was the strength of their love as to prompt to the doing of the work with earnestness and efficiency. They could best do it in fraternal combination, and they cordially united. Their only organizations for Christian purposes were societies of believers, called churches; and though they were constructed of similar constituents, on similar principles, and for similar ends, it is not apparent that they were formally affiliated for any increase of power, or any better prosecution of their common service. We can never cease admiring the union of two facts in their remarkable history — their simplicity of means, and their effectiveness of execution. They seemed to do little; they actually did much. Their movements, though eminently aggressive, were noiseless, and their paths were known, not by the dust they raised, but by the blessings which they scattered on either hand. We can account for the results of their simple endeavors upon no common principle of moral dynamics. In a few weeks they filled Jerusalem with their doctrine, and were surrounded by a company of more than five thousand; in a few years churches were multiplied in Palestine and Syria; then they spread out into heathen districts, Asiatic, European and African, and a secular historian soon recorded, what none disputed, that they had "filled the world with their converts." The victims of the terrible persecutions during the second and third centuries were hundreds of thousands; and yet they intermitted not their missionary work, southward into the heart of Africa, westward to the Atlantic Ocean, northward to Britain and Scandinavia, eastward to Tartary and China. The machinery employed with such projectile force is scarcely apparent. The truth is, Christians recognized this as their one chief work, and in the doing of it they were affectionately united. And here is our principle, that what cannot be most effectively done by individual enterprise and effort, should be done in fraternal combination. In a work so extended and of such magnitude, "two are better than one;" and, by parity of reasoning, the larger the number united the better, provided they coöperate harmoniously and with reference to their "single object." The expense of one organization, doing a large business, is much less than the aggregate expense of a number of smaller societies, and its efficiency, by a natural

law, is proportionately greater. So our fathers thought; so our common sense teaches. But, whatever the organization, larger or smaller, it must have the confidence and the heart of the Christian people — the praying, contributing friends of missions; it must emanate from them, be rooted in them, and draw from them its life; it must be their preferred agency for the accomplishment of their purposes. It must be merely an agency, as little complicated and cumbersome as possible, with no powers but just such as those who create and sustain it choose to confer. It should be in no sense a legislative, but wholly an executive, body; in no respect superior to the churches, but in every respect subordinate, doing on behalf of its constituents a fiscal and supervisory work, and directly responsible to them for fidelity to its few limited trusts. It should recognize in its fullest extent the parity of all the laborers, home and foreign, never trespassing by a hair's breadth on the rights of any, or arrogating to itself control that in the smallest measure can interfere with the subjection that is due exclusively to Christ.

Thus we have stated, as clearly as we are able, the nature and extent of OUR WORK, and the PRINCIPLES upon which we prosecute the service. If the organization under which we are now laboring is not adjusted to these principles, and is not doing, or cannot be made to do, in the best way the proper work, then we cordially, earnestly say, for Christ's sake, for the heathen's sake, for the denomination's sake, let it be changed till it shall come into harmony with the will of Him whose we are and whom we serve. We care little for the mechanism of an agency; we care much for the honor of our Master, for our fealty to Him, for the souls of the millions who need "the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ."

The work of the world's evangelization is in our heart of hearts, and has been from the hour of our spiritual birth. In our first consecration at the foot of the cross, we pledged to it "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." However imperfectly that pledge has been redeemed, it has never been retracted; it has been a thousand times renewed. We have put our hands to it, and we see no reason for looking back. It is accompanied by discouragements, annoyances, perplexities; but no more than attend every enterprise which imperfect men undertake. It has before it a bright future. We look through the long perspective, and see the fulfilment of

prophecy and promise. The Messiah "shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth." Why then should we falter or be disheartened? What is his work is our work. Come what may, we live for it, pray for it, labor for it, die for it.

"In spite of rock and tempest roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea! —
Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee;
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee — are all with thee."